

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An SS Ferret (3)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 742. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 438 corresponds to Litir 742.

Annas a’ Ghiblean ochd ceud deug, ochdad ’s a h-aon (1881), bha an Constabal Seumas MacDhaibhidh a’ coimhead an t-soithich, an *India*, agus i a’ dol a-steach a Chala Mhelbourne ann an Astràilia. ’S e Albannach a bh’ ann an MacDhaibhidh, agus bha e air ùr-ghluasad gu Astràilia. Fhad ’s a bha an India a’ seòladh seachad air, bha **am poileasman** a’ leughadh a’ Scotsman. Agus bha alt sa phàipear-naidheachd mun Ferret, agus mar a chaidh i à fianais ann an Alba.

Chunnaic Seumas gun robh an India coltach ris a’ Ferret. Chùm e a shùil oirre. Chuir e fios do na ceannardan aige. Chaidh oifigearan cusbainn air bòrd, agus chunnaic iad ainm eile fon ainm ‘India’ air a cliathaich.

Dh’fheuch MacEanraig agus a chompanaich ri teicheadh ach fhuair e grèim orra, agus chaidh iad don chùirt anns an Iuchar, agus grunn chasaidean orra, – foill, co-fheall, atharrachadh ainm soithich is eile. Bha an triùir a bh’ air cùl a’ ghnòthaich – MacEanraig, Uallas agus Wright (co-dhiù, sin na h-ainmean a thug iad don chùirt!) – air dithis eile fhadadh ann an Glaschu.

Thug fear dhiubh – Griffin, an t-àrd-einnseanair – **fianais nan aghaidh**. Bha am fear eile, Watkins, am prìomh-oifigear seòlaidh, air an soitheach fhàgail ann an Cape Town. Agus rinn an triùir a bha fo chasaid stòiridh mu Watkins, feuch gum biodh iad air an tomhas neoichiontach. Seo mar a tha an *Australasian Sketcher* ga mhìnèachadh.

Thuir an neach-lagha dìon, a’ bruidhinn às leth MhicEanraig, gun robh MacEanraig air an soitheach fhaighinn airson Watkins. Bha Watkins ag obair airson Riaghaltas Pheru. Bha Peru agus Chile ri cogadh an aghaidh a chèile. Bha Chile air bacadh a chur air luingeas ann am puirt Pheru. Chaidh am Ferret fhadadh airson a bhith a’ briseadh tron bhacadh agus luchd de dh’armachd a thoirt a Pheru. A h-uile rud a thachair às dèidh làimh, thuir am fear-lagha, bha sin dìreach airson an fhìrinn a chleith bho Riaghaltas Chile. Cha robh MacEanraig ri foill. Bha e an làn-dùil am Ferret a thoirt air ais a dh’Alba air neo a cheannach airson sùim a chaidh aontachadh ro làimh de sheachd mìle not.

Cha do ghabh an diùraidh ri sin. Cho-dhùin iad nach robh an triùir ciontach de bhith ri foill an aghaidh Companaidh Rèile na Gàidhealtachd. Ach fhuair iad ciontach iad de bhith a’ feuchainn ri foill a dhèanamh air daoine ann am Melbourne a bha am beachd am Ferret a cheannach agus de bhith ri foill an aghaidh Coimiseanair na Cusbainn. Fhuair MacEanraig seachd bliadhna sa phrìosan. Fhuair Uallas seachd bliadhna cuideachd, agus Wright trì bliadhna gu leth.

Cha do thill am Ferret a dh'Alba. Cheannaich fear ann an Adelaide i agus chuir e a seann ainm air ais oirre. Bha i ag obair timcheall costa Astràilia a Deas. Ann an naoi ceud deug 's a ceithir (1904) thug i taic do long Nirribheach a chaidh air a' chladach. Thug i a h-uile duine gu sàbhailteachd.

Sia bliadhn' deug às dèidh sin, chaidh am Ferret air na creagan ann an stoirm anns an dearbh àite. An turas seo, cha robh duine faisg airson cobhair a dhèanamh orra agus b' fheudar don chriutha còig cilemeatair a choiseachd gu sàbhailteachd. Agus b' e sin e airson a' Ferret. Cha do sheòl i tuilleadh.

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Faclan na Litreach: cusbainn: *customs*; neach-lagha dìon: *defence lawyer*; Nirribheach: *Norwegian*.

Abairtean na Litreach: an Constabal Seumas MacDhaibhidh: *Constable James Davidson*; bha e air ùr-ghluasad gu Astràilia: *he had just moved to Australia*; mar a chaidh i à fianais: *how she disappeared*; dh'fheuch MacEanraig agus a chompanaich ri teicheadh: *Henderson and his companions attempted to flee*; grunn chasaidean: *several charges*; foill, co-fheall, atharrachadh ainm soithich: *fraud, conspiracy, changing the name of a vessel*; bha am prìomh-oifigear seòlaidh air an soitheach fhàgail: *the sailing master had left the vessel*; rinn an triùir a bha fo chasaid stòiridh: *the three accused made a story*; feuch gum biodh iad air an tomhas neoichiontach: *in an attempt to be found not guilty*; bha Chile air bacadh a chur air luingean ann am puirt Pheru: *Chile had placed a shipping blockade on Peru's ports*; luchd de dh'armachd: *a cargo of weaponry*; dìreach airson an fhìrinn a chleith bho: *just to hide the truth from*; bha e an làn-dùil X a thoirt air ais a dh'Alba air neo a cheannach airson sùim a chaidh aontachadh ro làimh: *he totally expected to take X back to Scotland or to buy it for a sum that was agreed beforehand*; cha do ghabh an diùraidh ri: *the jury didn't accept*; fhuair iad ciontach iad de bhith a' feuchainn ri foill a dhèanamh air daoine: *they found them guilty of attempting to defraud people*; chuir e a seann ainm air ais oirre: *he gave her her old name back*; gun robh e ri foill: *that he was involved in deceipt*; ann an stoirm anns an dearbh àite: *in a storm in the same place*; airson cobhair a dhèanamh orra: *to help them*; b' fheudar don chriutha còig cilemeatair a choiseachd : *the crew had to walk five km*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: bha am poileasman a' leughadh a' Scotsman: *the policeman was reading the Scotsman. It's interesting that the old Gaelic dictionaries of Dwelly's time and before do not carry poileas or anything similar for 'police'*. Maor-sìth is probably the most common translation at that time. Poileas seems to have come into the language since that time, most likely as a loanword from English, influenced by the Scots pronunciation 'polis'. Poileas can mean both a single officer, and a police force. If we want to be specific about a single officer, we can use poileasman or oifigear (poilis).

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Thug fear dhiubh – Griffin, an t-àrd-einnseanair – fianais nan aghaidh: *One of them – Griffin, the chief engineer, gave evidence against them.*

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA